



Inside ICE

ICE HELPS RECOVER MASTERPIECES

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Special agents from ICE, working for years in an international joint operation, have assisted in the recovery of major works of art that were stolen five years ago from a waterfront museum in Stockholm, Sweden.

In addition, four suspects have been arrested in connection with the case. Those arrested have been identified as Dieya Kadhum, Baha Kadhum, Alexander Lindgren, and James Fowler, all of whom reside in Stockholm, Sweden. Prosecutors in Sweden and Los Angeles will work in consultation to determine where criminal charges should most appropriately be filed.

On December 23, 2000 three armed bandits brandishing machine guns robbed the Swedish National Museum in Stockholm, Sweden, of three paintings: Auguste Renoir's "Young Parisian," "Conversation" and Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn's "Self Portrait" (c.1630).

The robbers escaped with the paintings on a boat moored near the museum while employing distracting tactics, including tire spikes and diversionary car bombs in other parts of the city.

The investigation into that crime was a joint effort by members of the Organized Crime Task Force in Los Angeles (ICE, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles), law enforcement authorities in Sweden and Denmark and the ICE and FBI Attachés in Copenhagen, Denmark. The investigation also benefited from the considerable and knowledgeable assistance of the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.



Rembrandt's "Self Portrait," top, was recovered within the past few days following a five-year investigation. Renoir's "Young Parisian," below, was recovered in Los Angeles earlier this year.

Members of the task force, including ICE, launched an operation targeting the international theft ring responsible for the robbery. During the course of the investigation, the investigators worked

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closely with law enforcement overseas, including the Copenhagen City Police (CCP), the Danish National Police (DNP), and the Stockholm County Police (SCP).

The task force investigation was triggered when a Los Angeles investigation into a local criminal enterprise led to the identification of an organized theft group in Sweden. Subsequently, the U.S. task force worked jointly with the CCP, DNP, and the SCP to coordinate efforts that resulted in an undercover sting operation.

Information developed by the U.S. task force indicated that the suspects arrested in the sting were attempting to sell the stolen painting in Los Angeles and Sweden. The task force was able to introduce a FBI undercover agent with substantial knowledge of art to pose as the buyer/broker for the stolen Rembrandt.

On September 14 and 15 the undercover agent met with suspects in Copenhagen, Denmark to negotiate the purchase of the stolen Rembrandt painting. The suspects brought the painting to a Copenhagen hotel expecting to sell the painting for a large sum of money.

Upon authentication of the painting by the undercover agent, the CCP and the DNP arrested the four suspects and seized the Rembrandt painting.

Renoir's "Young Parisian" was recovered in Los Angeles earlier this year and authenticated by the Curator of the Getty Museum. Rembrandt's "Self Portrait" was recovered within the past few days. The SCP had previously recovered Renoir's "Conversation" in July of 2001.

Swedish authorities place the combined estimated value of the recovered paintings at approximately \$45 million. Apart from the high monetary value of the recovered works, the paintings are also national treasures of Sweden.

"This case is a testament to the power of multi-agency cooperation and tenacious police work. From the discovery of the initial lead to the recovery of the second painting earlier this week, the officers in this case logged hundreds of hours and crisscrossed two continents," said Loraine Brown, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge in Los Angeles. "And because of those efforts, art lovers around the world will again be able to enjoy these masterpieces for generations."

The investigation is continuing in Los Angeles and overseas.

ICE NABS THREE AT NUKE PLANT

BLAIR, Neb. — In the latest in a series of arrests involving illegal aliens at nuclear facilities, ICE special agents arrested three illegal aliens in Blair September 15 when they attempted to enter the outer secure area of the Omaha Public Power District's Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station to perform contract work at the plant for the first time.

The three men, all citizens of Mexico, had been hired by an independent contractor to perform maintenance work at the nuclear facility. As they attempted to enter a secure area of the plant, the men presented identification documents that raised the suspicions of Omaha Public Power District employees. They contacted ICE special agents for assistance, who responded and arrested the men after determining that they were illegally present in the United States.

All three men have been placed in immigration removal proceedings. ICE agents are investigating the circumstances under which the private contractor hired the illegal aliens. ICE agents have determined that the

illegal aliens were not engaged in any terrorist activity.

"America's security depends on controlling access to sensitive facilities like nuclear power plants," said Michael Wardy, Resident Agent-in-Charge of the ICE office in Omaha.

"ICE works closely," Wardy said "with these industries across the nation to identify vulnerabilities that pose a potential security threat, then we aggressively act to remove that threat. In this case, the system worked exactly the way it was supposed to because the nuclear plant detected the illegal aliens before they could enter."

The enforcement action in Nebraska is the latest in a series of ICE arrests involving illegal aliens performing contract work at nuclear plants and other nuclear-related facilities around the country.

To date, there have been 56 investigations of nuclear power plants and 1,005 related employers, and 64,835 employee audits have been completed.

Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Please send comments and contributions to:

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ICE RESPONSE TO KATRINA UNPRECEDENTED

ICE has deployed more than 700 personnel to the Gulf Coast and the city of New Orleans in a unified and unprecedented agency response to Hurricane Katrina, the worst natural disaster in the nation's history.

Acting Assistant Secretary John Clark spent three days on the Gulf Coast observing first-hand the hard work and dedication of ICE personnel from around the country who are conducting search and rescue missions, providing security for the FEMA mission, assisting affected ICE and other government employees, and helping local law enforcement restore security to the region.

On Wednesday morning, August 31, Clark declared that relief for the communities devastated by Hurricane Katrina and for those ICE employees affected by this catastrophe was now the agency's number one priority. By September 5, ICE had deployed almost 700 employees from throughout the agency to assist in the hurricane response.

The individuals in the consolidated ICE response force are coming from all parts of the organization. ICE

deployed Special Response Teams (tactical law enforcement teams) from El Paso, Buffalo, San Diego, Dallas, Miami, Chicago, and San Antonio. The ICE response includes FPS officers, ICE special agents, Detention and Removal Operations officers, Office of Intelligence analysts, and support personnel.

"We are all saddened by the destruction of property and loss of life that Katrina wrought in the greater Gulf area," said Clark. "We can take solace and pride in the superhuman efforts our ICE employees have been tirelessly contributing since the first day of this natural disaster."

ICE operations in the hurricane and flood-ravaged City of New Orleans included:

An ICE Office of Investigations Special Response Team equipped for marine operations rescued a 99-



Acting Assistant Secretary John Clark, right, discusses the ICE Hurricane Katrina response with ICE New Orleans Special Agent-in-Charge Mike Holt.

year-old woman who had been stuck in her New Orleans home surrounded by four feet of water since Hurricane Katrina hit last week. The woman is the mother of a U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel currently serving in Iraq.

An ICE Detention and Removal Operations Special Response Team rescued an elderly couple that had been stuck in their flooded New Orleans home for days without food and water.

An ICE Federal Protective Service sergeant was providing security for a FEMA detail when he observed a young man fall roughly 50 feet from a nearby overpass. The victim had been riding a bicycle on the overpass when he struck a wall, flipped over the rail, and fell to the water below. The officer responded and was able to pull him to safety.

ICE Special Response Teams participated in joint law enforcement operations with the New Orleans Police Department and SWAT teams to secure a major housing project known for violence. The operation resulted in the arrest of one subject and the seizure of two firearms. Earlier, ICE Special Response Teams participated in a similar law enforcement operation to secure a bank building.



An ICE Detention and Removal Operations officer patrols the flooded and deserted streets of downtown New Orleans.

ICE DEPORTS BANK ROBBER TO ERITREA

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — ICE announced September 15 that a Los Angeles businessman convicted of robbing two Canadian banks in the mid-1970s, ostensibly to raise funds for an insurgent group fighting for Eritrea's independence, has been deported to his adopted country.



Berhe Mahrai

ICE officials confirmed that Berhe Mahrai, 56, was removed to Eritrea this week on board a commercial flight under escort by ICE officers.

Mahrai was arrested by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers

at Los Angeles International Airport February 17 after a routine computer background check revealed he was the subject of an ICE lookout.

Canadian authorities advised ICE that Mahrai may have once been a member of the Eritrean Liberation Front. Mahrai told an immigration judge in April that he would accept deportation to Eritrea.

"This is another example of how enhanced security at our nation's ports and increased international cooperation are enabling us to intercept criminals and others who have previously eluded detection," said John Salter, Chief Counsel for ICE in Los Angeles. "The lesson in this is that those who fail to reveal their true past can expect to experience the full weight of the law."

ICE agents conducting the follow-up investigation on Mahrai subsequently determined that he was wanted on an outstanding local warrant for assault with a deadly weapon. ICE agents turned Mahrai over to the U.S. Marshals Service and he was convicted on the

charges in July. After serving his sentence, Mahrai was returned to ICE custody last month for removal.

Mahrai, who operated two liquor stores and an Ethiopian restaurant in Los Angeles, originally came to the United States in the early 1970s. Shortly after arriving, he married an American and settled in Detroit.

In 1974, Mahrai and another Ethiopian national traveled to Canada where they robbed a bank in Toronto and one in London, Ontario. Mahrai was convicted of both crimes and sentenced to four years in prison. At about the same time, Mahrai's wife divorced him.

After serving his prison sentence, Canadian authorities deported Mahrai to Ethiopia in 1976. ICE investigators believe Mahrai returned to the United States sometime in the early 1980s. Several years ago, Mahrai applied for U.S. citizenship, but U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services denied his application in 2002 because of his criminal history and referred the case to ICE.

ICE, BRAZILIANS BREAK HUMAN SMUGGLING RING

MIAMI, Fla. — ICE, the Brazilian Federal Police (DPF), and the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS) announced September 14 that a 16-month international human smuggling investigation culminated with the arrests of 48 individuals linked to an international smuggling ring operating out of Brazil and stretching as far as Miami, Mexico City, Amsterdam, and Bangkok.

More than 600 DPF officers in Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Governador Valadares and Ipatinga in Brazil conducted the operation. In addition to the arrests, more than 100 search warrants were executed in various locations in these cities.

The individuals arrested included officers from the DPF, Brazilian Customs, airline personnel and others thought to be part of an organization that had been smuggling foreign nationals in and out of Brazil and onward through Mexico to the United States.

"Uncovering and halting criminal activities that, if left unchecked, would threaten the national security of the U.S., Brazil and other nations is and will continue to be a top priority for our agency," said Jesus Torres, Special Agent-in-Charge of ICE in Miami. "The success of this international operation exemplifies our willingness and commitment to as-

sist countries around the globe in their fight against crime."

"This case is a classic example of how international police cooperation can lead to the dismantling of major human smuggling organizations, said Julio Velez, ICE Attaché in Brazil. "The cooperation received in this case from the Brazilian Federal Police is a testimony to the fantastic relationship developed between our two governments."

The ICE Attaché in Mexico, the Spanish National Police, the German National Police, and the Dutch and Bolivian National Police assisted in the investigation.

SENATE WITNESS ON HAWALAS SENTENCED FOR RUNNING ONE

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — A Virginia man who testified before a U.S. Senate committee after 9/11 on the dangers of money transmitting businesses (commonly known as “hawalas”) was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison for operating one without a license, in violation of provisions of the USA Patriot Act.

Rahim Bariek, 46, of Herndon, Va. was arrested by special agents from ICE and IRS on April 15. Bariek received at least \$4.9 million in funds from individuals wishing to transfer money out of the United States to places including Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran. He testified before Congress as a hawala expert on November 14, 2001 that he knew all his customers and said, “I am happy to comply with the [USA Patriot Act],” which requires money transmitting businesses to comply with state licensing requirements. But the government presented evidence at Bariek’s sentencing showing that he could not possibly have known all of his customers, and that he transmitted funds to Afghanistan immediately after the 9/11 terrorist attacks when Afghanistan was still under the control of the Taliban and a base for Al-Qaeda operations.

“Illegal money transmittal businesses and hawalas pose a serious vulnerability because they provide criminals with a back-door mechanism to move dirty money around the globe undetected,” said Allan J. Doody, Special Agent-in-Charge ICE in Washington, D.C.

FEDERAL GRAND JURY INDICTS 12 FOR MARRIAGE SCAM, SMUGGLING

CHICAGO, Ill. — Following an ICE investigation, a federal grand jury handed down indictments September 15 charging 12 defendants with recruiting and offering U.S. citizens up to \$10,000 to marry Lithuanian nationals for the purpose of fraudulently obtaining immigration benefits.

The defendants were charged in two multi-count indictments that said U.S. citizens were recruited and offered between \$8,000 and \$10,000 to engage in fraudulent marriages with Lithuanian nationals. At times, the U.S. citizens were instructed to travel to Lithuania to marry the foreign national, and other times the U.S. citizens were recruited to marry Lithuanian nationals already living illegally in the U.S.

One indictment alleges that Remigijus Adomaitis, 28, recruited and paid a U.S. citizen to travel to Lithuania in

November 2004 to marry a Lithuanian woman he had never met. After the marriage took place, Adomaitis accompanied the U.S. citizen to the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, Poland, to help him file paperwork that allowed the woman to fraudulently enter the U.S. The U.S. citizen was to be paid \$1,000 after the marriage, and \$250 a month for two to three years.

“The national security and public safety of our nation depends on an immigration system with integrity,” said Special Agent-in-Charge Elissa A. Brown of the Chicago ICE office. “ICE is restoring this integrity by aggressively targeting the criminals and human smuggling organizations that are motivated by pure greed and profit.”

ICE, CBP DONATE SEIZED CLOTHES TO HURRICANE KATRINA VICTIMS

SAN ANTONIO, Texas — Nine fully loaded U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) tractor-trailers delivered several hundred thousand pieces of seized clothing to an American Red Cross facility in San Antonio September 9.

The clothing was donated as part of ICE’s and CBP’s effort to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina who have been evacuated to San Antonio. The convoy of trucks drove in from the port of El Paso, Texas, where CBP officers loaded the trucks with cartons of seized clothing over the past few days.

The donation represents the enforcement efforts of both ICE and CBP agencies within the Department of Homeland Security. The many shipments of clothing were seized at various Texas ports of entry for violations of U.S. trademark laws. Both ICE and CBP agents and officers are responsible for enforcing such laws.

San Antonio ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Al Pena and CBP Acting Port Director Celia Ridel presented the huge donation to an official with the American Red Cross. Included in the shipments were: blouses, slacks, skirts, jeans, shorts, and other apparel.

“The seized clothing items donated is the first step towards helping these victims get back on their feet,” said Pena.

Several ICE and CBP agents and officers assisted in unloading the trucks at the donation site. In a similar effort Tuesday, trucks from Laredo, El Paso and Houston also delivered new clothing to the Reliant Astrodome complex in Houston to be distributed by the American Red Cross and St. Luke’s Methodist Ministries to Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

Inside ICE

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.

SPECIAL RESPONSE



A member of an ICE Special Response Team (SRT) patrols the streets of New Orleans aboard a military vehicle. ICE SRTs from throughout the country were among the more than 700 ICE personnel deployed to the Gulf Coast in response to Hurricane Katrina.